

School-Based Health Centers and Academic Success

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Poor academic outcomes and high dropout rates are major concerns of educators, policy makers, and parents alike – and poor health severely limits a child's motivation and ability to learn. Recent research confirms that ***health disparities affect educational achievement*** (1). Improving students' health is integral to education reform.

Why School-Based Health Centers?

School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs)—the convergence of public health, primary care, and mental health—provide an optimal setting to ***foster learning readiness and academic achievement*** while giving children the resources they need to improve their health.

The Facts:

- High school SBHC users in one 2000 study had a ***50% decrease in absenteeism*** and ***25% decrease in tardiness*** two months after receiving school-based mental health and counseling (2).
- A study of SBHC users in Seattle found that those who use the clinic for medical purposes had a ***significant increase in attendance*** over nonusers (3).
- African-American male SBHC users were ***three times more likely to stay in school*** than their peers who did not use the SBHC (4).
- Students, teachers, and parents who have a SBHC ***rated academic expectations, school engagement, and safety and respect significantly higher*** than in schools without a SBHC (5).
- SBHCs in The Bronx, NY ***reduced hospitalization*** and increased school attendance among ***school children with asthma*** (6).
- A quasi-experimental study in New York observed that students not enrolled in a SBHC lost three times as much seat time as students enrolled in a SBHC (7).